



Disaster-related physical and mental health: A role for the family physician

Author(s): Freedy JR, Simpson WM Jr
Year: 2007
Journal: American Family Physician. 75 (6): 841-846

Abstract:

Natural disasters, technologic disasters, and mass violence impact millions of persons each year. The use of primary health care services typically increases for 12 or more months following major disasters. A conceptual framework for assisting disaster victims involves understanding the individual and environmental risk factors that influence post-disaster physical and mental health. Victims of disaster will typically present to family physicians with acute physical health problems such as gastroenteritis or viral syndromes. Chronic problems often require medications and ongoing primary care. Some victims may be at risk of acute or chronic mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, or alcohol abuse. Risk factors for post-disaster mental health problems include previous mental health problems and high levels of exposure to disaster-related stresses (e.g., fear of death or serious injury, exposure to serious injury or death, separation from family, prolonged displacement). An action plan should involve adequate preparation for a disaster. Family physicians should educate themselves about disaster-related physical and mental health threats; cooperate with local and national organizations; and make sure clinics and offices are adequately supplied with medications and suture and casting material as appropriate. Physicians also should plan for the care and safety of their own families.

Source: Ask your librarian to help locate this item.

Resource Description

Communication:

resource focus on research or methods on how to communicate or frame issues on climate change; surveys of attitudes, knowledge, beliefs about climate change

A focus of content

Communication Audience:

audience to whom the resource is directed

Health Professional

Exposure :

weather or climate related pathway by which climate change affects health

Extreme Weather Event, Human Conflict/Displacement, Human Conflict/Displacement

Geographic Feature:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal



resource focuses on specific type of geography

None or Unspecified

Geographic Location:

resource focuses on specific location

Global or Unspecified

Health Impact:

specification of health effect or disease related to climate change exposure

Infectious Disease, Injury, Mental Health/Stress

Infectious Disease: Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Foodborne/Waterborne Disease: General Foodborne/Waterborne Disease

Mental Health Effect/Stress: Stress Disorder

Intervention:

strategy to prepare for or reduce the impact of climate change on health

A focus of content

Medical Community Engagement:

resource focus on how the medical community discusses or acts to address health impacts of climate change

A focus of content

Mitigation/Adaptation:

mitigation or adaptation strategy is a focus of resource

Adaptation

Population of Concern: A focus of content

Population of Concern:

populations at particular risk or vulnerability to climate change impacts

Low Socioeconomic Status, Racial/Ethnic Subgroup

Other Racial/Ethnic Subgroup: Ethnic minorities

Other Vulnerable Population: People with pre-existing mental health problems

Resource Type:

format or standard characteristic of resource

Research Article

Resilience:

Climate Change and Human Health Literature Portal

capacity of an individual, community, or institution to dynamically and effectively respond or adapt to shifting climate impact circumstances while continuing to function

A focus of content

Timescale: ☒

time period studied

Time Scale Unspecified